INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

FOIPOP

Routine Access Policy

106-05014/

1. POLICY STATEMENT

This "Routine Access" policy for Intergovernmental Affairs is designed to provide persons with an opportunity to obtain certain categories of records without having to submit a *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* Application. It shall be administered in accordance with the following principles:

a) Personal Privacy

The policy shall be applied in a manner which will be considerate and protective of the personal privacy of individuals and records subject to this policy shall be considered for release and severing in a manner consistent with the *FOIPOP*

b) Timeliness

The Department of Intergovernmental Affairs will respond to requests made under the Routine Access Policy in a reasonable and timely fashion.

c) Cost Recovery

Fees for the reproduction and provision of records may be charged where authorized by policies, regulations, or statutes.

d)Transparency

This policy shall be made available to the public through the Intergovernmental Affairs web site.

e) Reasonableness

This policy shall apply to requests for reasonable quantities of records.

2. DEFINITIONS

Routine Access is the routine or automatic release, in full or in part, of certain types of administrative or operational records as a matter of course in response to a request without the need for a formal application for records under the *FOIPOP Act.*

Active Dissemination is the periodic and proactive release of information or records in the absence of a request using mechanisms such as the Internet, libraries, etc. .

FOIPOP Access is the release of a record in response to a formal FOIPOP application made under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.*

A Record "includes books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other thing on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic, mechanical or other means, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records". (clause 3(1) (k) *FOIPOP Act*)

Intergovernmental "means between the Government of Nova Scotia and any of the following or their agencies:
(i) the Government of Canada or a province of Canada,
(ii) a municipal unit or school board,
(iii) an aboriginal government,
(iv) the government of a foreign state, or
(v) an international organization of states;

Public Agenda "means a meeting agenda jointly prepared and approved for public release by representatives of governments participating in the meeting.

Public Communique "means a statement jointly prepared and approved for public release by representatives of governments participating in the meeting to which the communique relates.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objective of the implementation of this policy is the accessibility of certain records routinely without additional administrative time being required of staff to fulfill "Routine Access" requests . It is also to provide a greater certain of access for those requesting information, and reflect the spirit of openness and accountability of the FOIPOP Legislation.

4. APPLICATION

This policy shall apply only to requests for reasonable quantities of records designated under this policy in accordance with the routine access records list provided below and shall not apply to a request for more than 50 pages of records in a particular category and/or time period. Repetitive requests by an individual for significant volumes of records or the separation of a request into several small requests totalling a large volume, shall not be subject to the policy. It is important to ensure that the application of the Routine Access policy of the department not unduly interfere with the day-to-day operations of the department.

Requests made under Routine Access do not apply to information subject to exemptions under the Act.

Routine Access requests only apply to information created after October 23, 2003.

Personal information will be severed with the same criteria and in the same manner as requests made under the *FOIPOP Act.*

Intergovernmental Affairs Routine Access Records List

1. Contracts under the NS Government Public Tenders Policy, except for elements where confidentiality of certain business or personal information is requested by the contracting party or elements providing information about intergovernmental negotiations, or as having potential to harm intergovernmental relations.

2. Personal service contracts of individuals not appointed pursuant to the Civil Service Act, excluding personal information, service or product trade secrets, and elements providing information about intergovernmental negotiations, or as having potential to harm intergovernmental relations.

   Secondment agreements both within and outside government, excluding personal information, and elements providing information about intergovernmental negotiations, or as having potential to harm intergovernmental relations.

3. Financial records that provide details of actual "public Body" expenditures on goods and services, except for elements providing information about intergovernmental negotiations, or as having potential to harm intergovernmental relations.

4. Individual expense claims of specifically identified individuals relating to a period of up to three months, not including invoices or individual credit card bills.

5. Annual Office of Intergovernmental Affairs client satisfaction survey reports.

6. Public agenda of specifically identified meetings attended by the Nova Scotia Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.

7. Expenditures for specifically identified meetings hosted by the Nova Scotia Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs and attended by Ministers, including First Ministers, of other governments.

8. Media Scans produced by Office of Intergovernmental Affairs staff, for specifically identified dates.

9. Specifically identified occupational health & safety records relating to the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, except for elements presenting personal privacy or security issues.

10. Specifically identified final reports provided to the Nova Scotia Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs by another government, where the report is neither provided in confidence nor has potential to harm intergovernmental relations.

11. Public communiques from meetings attended by the Nova Scotia Minister responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs.

12. Specifically identified international agreements to which Nova Scotia is a signatory.

13. Specifically identified Memoranda of Understanding entered into by the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs or administered by the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs.

14. Final audits of the Nova Scotia Government Internal Audit Unit except for elements providing information about intergovernmental negotiations, or as having potential to harm intergovernmental relations.

5. POLICY DIRECTIVES

The Routine Access Policy will be posted on Intergovernmental Affairs website.
All Intergovernmental Affairs staff will be advised of the policy coming into force. The requests will be forwarded to designated persons and a tracking system will be kept for compliance and auditing purposes.

6. POLICY GUIDELINES

Once a request for "Routine Access" to a particular record, or set of records, has been received, it shall be forwarded to Darlene Hawes who shall review the request and determine if the records are within the schedule of those designated. If the policy does not apply to the request, a response to the requester shall be provided promptly and shall indicate what other avenues may be available to obtain the information
(e.g. FOIPOP Application). If the policy applies to the request, the records shall be provided to the applicant within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 30 days from receipt of the request.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY

The Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs shall be accountable for the implementation of this policy. All employees are responsible for following the policy directives, guidelines and procedures.

8. COMPLIANCE

The *FOIPOP* Administrator of Intergovernmental Affairs shall be responsible for ensuring the compliance with this policy.

9. EVALUATION

The "Routine Access" Program established under this policy shall be evaluated on an annual basis by the FOIPOP Administrator.

10. REFERENCES

***Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, S.N.S. 1993, c. 5, s. 12 as am by S.N.S. 1999 (2nd Sess.), c. 11, s. 8:**

Intergovernmental affairs

12 (1) The head of a public body may refuse to disclose information to an applicant if the disclosure could reasonably be expected to

(a) harm the conduct by the Government of Nova Scotia of relations between the Government and any of the following or their agencies:

(i) the Government of Canada or a province of Canada,

(ii) a municipal unit or school board,

(iii) an aboriginal government,

(iv) the government of a foreign state, or

(v) an international organization of states;

(b) reveal information received in confidence from a government, body or organization listed in clause (a) or their agencies unless the government, body, organization or its agency consents to the disclosure or makes the information public.

(2) The head of a public body shall not disclose information referred to in subsection (1) without the consent of the Governor in Council.

(3) Subsections (1) and (2) do not apply to information in a record that has been in existence for fifteen or more years.

Section 27 - Personal Information
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, **S.N.S. 1993, c. 5, s. 12 as am by S.N.S. 1999 (2nd Sess.), c. 11 s. 8:**

11. INQUIRIES

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12. APPENDICES

Section 12 - Intergovernmental Affairs
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, **S.N.S. 1993, c. 5, s. 12 as am by S.N.S. 1999 (2nd Sess.), c. 11, s. 8:**

Section 27 - Personal Information
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, **S.N.S. 1993, c. 5, s. 12 as am by S.N.S. 1999 (2nd Sess.), c. 11 s. 8:**

October 23 , 2003